

# West Park Academy



Key Stage 2  
Reading Strategy

## **Reading Strategy – Key Stage 2**

### **West Park Academy**

**"It's the book that opens up the world to you."** — Michael Morpurgo

This quote by Michael Morpurgo resonates deeply with West Park Academy's intention for reading, which is to inspire a lifelong love of learning while empowering each student to reach their full potential. By viewing books as gateways to the world, students are encouraged to not only find enjoyment in reading but also to explore new ideas, cultures, and perspectives.

West Park Academy aims to cultivate confident, inquisitive readers who see reading as more than a skill—it's a way to connect with the world, understand different experiences, and gain the knowledge necessary to succeed academically and personally.

#### **Intent**

Our reading strategy is designed to foster a love for reading by nurturing each pupil's desire to explore books, instilling a passion that extends beyond the classroom. We aim for all students to achieve fluency and comprehension, enabling them to read easily, fluently and with good understanding. Through exposure to diverse texts, we seek to expand their vocabulary and develop critical thinking skills, supporting them to engage deeply with language and ideas. This foundation equips our students to access the wider curriculum confidently and prepares them for lifelong learning.

#### **Implementation**

Reading is at the core of our curriculum at West Park Academy, and we are committed to making it accessible to all students, regardless of background. We integrate a text-rich curriculum with high-quality literature that reflects diverse cultures and perspectives, ensuring that "all pupils should encounter characters, situations and viewpoints that mirror their own lives". Structured reading sessions provide targeted support, while independent reading fosters personal exploration and confidence. Whole-class reading of complete texts allows for in-depth analysis and shared experiences, building a communal love for literature. At every stage, we read to practice and improve, reading both for purpose and for pleasure, creating well-rounded, enthusiastic readers.

## Reading Offer in KS2

At West Park Academy, we are committed to providing a rich and engaging reading experience for every child. Each day includes dedicated story time, allowing students to enjoy books purely for pleasure. Our reading lessons are centered around high-quality literature and non-fiction texts, designed to challenge and inspire our learners.

Teachers use high-quality, real texts, from our whole-school document *The Texts We Study and Why* and their own choices for story time. These texts are carefully chosen to be challenging and often lie beyond students' independent reading abilities, fostering deeper understanding and enjoyment. Additionally, teachers incorporate Doug Lemov's *5 Plagues of Reading* to expose students to a diverse range of complex text types. These include **Archaic Texts** (with historical language styles), **Non-linear Time Sequences** (stories told out of sequence), **Narratively Complex Texts** (with multiple narrators or perspectives), **Figurative or Symbolic Texts** (rich in metaphor and symbolism), and **Resistant Texts** (texts with layered meanings that encourage analytical thinking).

Year 6 students take on reading leadership roles, fostering a supportive reading community across year groups. We dedicate time specifically for reading for pleasure, allowing students to immerse themselves in books of their choosing, supported by a well-curated classroom library featuring a diverse range of texts. All classroom doors display the current book which the pupils are reading as a class. Adults from outside of the class are expected to ask the children about the book in order to raise the profile of the class text and stimulate book talk in classrooms.

To extend reading beyond the classroom, we offer extra-curricular book clubs, plan theatre visits, and organize author events, bringing the joy of storytelling to life. Reading assemblies and performance poetry are integral parts of our curriculum, celebrating creativity and expression. Additionally, we provide regular, focused reading support sessions to ensure all children are able to keep up and succeed in their reading journey.

## Reading Learning Sequence

### 1. **Previously:**

At the beginning of each reading sequence, we introduce the title and author of the new book, sharing a picture of the author to connect students with the writer behind the story. We discuss other works by the author, fostering familiarity with their style and themes. The title is explored for its language and phrasing, enhancing students' understanding of how words convey meaning. Students are encouraged to predict the story and brainstorm associated words linked to the title, building curiosity and anticipation. Links are drawn to previous books in our *School Reading Spine: Texts We Study and Why* to connect themes, characters, or settings. To support comprehension, we provide relevant background knowledge, such as historical or cultural context, to help students develop mental models of the story.

2. **Vocabulary Instruction:**

Effective vocabulary instruction is central to our reading strategy. Research suggests introducing 6-10 new words per week to build reading fluency and comprehension without overwhelming young learners. Vocabulary is taught in relation to the story to enhance retention, prioritizing *tier 2 words*—versatile words that appear across subjects and contexts. Key words vital to understanding the text are introduced with simple, child-friendly definitions, maximizing lesson time for comprehension. We use retrieval practice to reinforce new vocabulary through repetition and context, using strategies like “My turn – your turn” to encourage active participation and repetition.

3. **Fluent First Read:**

An adult models fluent reading, allowing students to enjoy and immerse themselves in the text while developing their subconscious “reading voice.” Adults pause to sense-check and summarize, engage in “I wonder” moments, and making connections to other books or real-life situations. Visualizing is encouraged, where adults describe mental images of scenes to help students create vivid imagery. Key phrases or ideas are highlighted or noted down to show what makes certain words or sections of a text significant.

4. **Fluency Building:**

In Key Stage 2, we use a range of strategies to practice and develop children’s fluency skills. Teachers model reading aloud while students follow along, often annotating their texts to align with the main learning objective, such as prosody, pausing, or pacing. Paired reading practice then allows students to improve and reinforce their skills in this specific area, with students trained to provide constructive feedback to each other. Pairings are thoughtfully chosen, with stronger readers supporting peers to enhance fluency skills.

Fluency evaluation and feedback are guided by Rasinski’s EARS assessment tool, providing structured insight into each student’s progress. Additional strategies, including “jump in/jump out,” echoic, and choral reading, add variety to fluency practice and are used as appropriate. Texts selected for fluency work are purposefully challenging, exposing students to unfamiliar language and complex sentence structures. Students have opportunities to explore these texts across various curriculum subjects.

Adults play a vital role in this process, actively modelling reading techniques and scaffolding vocabulary to support students in building strong, confident reading fluency.

5. **Comprehension Construct:**

This part of the lesson allows students to think deeply about the text through teacher-led questions and activities tailored to the text itself. Examples include sequencing events, character trait analysis, fact vs. opinion exercises and emotion graphs that track a character’s feelings.

## 6. **Formal Recorded Comprehension:**

To develop skills for formal comprehension assessments, students practice recording responses in structured formats and encounter a range of question types and formats. While comprehension is integrated throughout reading sessions, this formal component ensures students build familiarity with test-style questions and develop confidence in expressing their understanding in writing.

## **Assessment**

At West Park Academy, we recognize the importance of using a *full basket of measures* to gain a comprehensive understanding of each child's reading progress. This approach means assessing various aspects of reading, such as comprehension, fluency, accuracy, and expressive reading (prosody). By looking at multiple dimensions, we can create a well-rounded view of each child's strengths and areas for growth, rather than relying on a single measure. This allows us to identify specific needs, tailor interventions, and ensure that every child progresses in all aspects of reading.

Our assessment focus is tailored to the age and stage of each student. In Years 3 to 5, we use NFER assessments to evaluate comprehension skills, giving insight into students' understanding of texts. Additionally, the Lingfield Education Trust fluency check is used to measure words per minute and accuracy, helping to pinpoint students who may need targeted fluency support. Prosody, or expressive reading, is assessed by listening to children read aloud during fluency-building lessons and through 1:1 reading sessions.

In Year 6, we shift to using past SAT papers to assess comprehension skills, helping us to monitor readiness for formal assessments and secondary school. This full basket of measures enables us to support and challenge our students at each stage, using diverse assessments to build a complete picture of their reading abilities.

## **Engagement with families and the community**

At West Park Academy, we prioritize strong partnerships with families and the community to create a shared commitment to reading. Reading is central to our homework policy, with students expected to read at home a minimum of three times per week. For students who are unable to complete this at home, additional reading time is provided at school to ensure consistent practice. Parents are contacted if home reading diaries are not completed weekly, fostering accountability and engagement in each child's reading journey.

We support parents with resources and suggestions to encourage a love for books at home, and we offer family reading workshops to help parents understand the importance of reading and provide strategies for establishing positive reading habits. Our connections extend into the community as well, with involvement in local reading events and partnerships with libraries, enriching our school's culture of reading and reinforcing its importance in students' lives both in and out of school.

## **Celebrating Reading Success**

At West Park Academy, we aim to celebrate and inspire children's love for reading by recognizing their achievements and encouraging a genuine passion for books. Students' reading achievements are highlighted with awards, certificates, and displays, and they earn dojos for reading, aligning with our whole-school reward policy. Year groups also participate in exciting reading challenges in partnership with the local library, fostering a sense of community and accomplishment. While we celebrate progress, our ultimate goal is to inspire an intrinsic love for reading—encouraging children to find joy and personal satisfaction in books beyond external rewards.

## **Our Commitment**

West Park Academy is dedicated to creating a reading environment that not only inspires and challenges but also nurtures every child's potential. Rooted in our school's vision to inspire a lifelong love of learning and support each child in reaching their full potential, our approach to reading is comprehensive and inclusive. Guided by the principles of the *Reading Framework 2023*, we aim to make reading an exciting, integral part of our students' lives, accessible to all regardless of background or ability. Our commitment extends beyond academic success; we strive to cultivate confident, curious readers who view books as gateways to knowledge, empathy, and personal growth. By fostering these skills and values, we are preparing our students for both their academic journeys and their broader life experiences.